

the good of their souls. If we will make ourselves familiar with his method of reaching the heart and conscience of the sinner, we will then know how we must proceed in dealing with an unconverted one in the interests of his soul.

Let us take the case of a woman of Samaria, whom Jesus met at Jacob's Well. Clearly it was the purpose of Jesus to lead her to the apprehension and acceptance of himself as the Messiah. He does not address her abruptly in regard to her spiritual condition, but taking up her answer to him when he asked her to give him drink, he proceeds gradually to unfold to her himself as the only one who can satisfy the deepest needs of every soul. Having done so, his next step is to bring her to a sense of her sin, and excite her thirst for the water of life of which he had spoken.

If we would follow the example of the Lord Jesus in addressing the unconverted, we must set Christ before them as the only and all sufficient Saviour of sinners, as "the Bread and Water of Life," as "the Way, the Truth and the Life." "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

Our next step in dealing with the soul is to awaken the conscience, to excite a thirst for the Water of Life. The woman of Samaria was brought to feel that she was a sinner, and made to understand that Jesus was the willing Saviour of sinners, and then led to ask for an interest in this Saviour—"Give me this water."

In all our efforts to lead sinners to Christ, let us remember that Jesus Christ is the Way and the Truth, and the Life, "and only those who thirst will desire or take 'the Water of Life.'" "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!" "And let him that is athirst come."—*United Presbyterian.*

The Sunday School

LESSON FOR APRIL 10

BY THE EDITOR

Sufferings of Jesus Foretold.—Matthew 16: 21-28.

GOLDEN TEXT.—He was bruised for our iniquities.—Isaiah 53: 5.

LESSON THOUGHT.—If we would get into close communion with God, there must not only be self-denial but cross bearing also, a laying down and a taking up.

Introductory Notes

To get an intelligent understanding of this lesson read Matthew 16: 1-28. This being Easter Sunday and the passage of scripture touching on the death and resurrection of Jesus, an excellent Easter lesson may be taught from it. If an Easter lesson is taught make use of these two Golden Texts:

He is bruised for our iniquities.

Now is Christ risen from the dead.

Here are the two thoughts of the lesson: Christ died and Christ rose again. Both are foretold in verse 21.

21 *From that time.* After what Jesus

said to the disciples in verses 13-20. It was the beginning of the last year of our Lord's ministry, and during this time he gradually prepared the disciples for the coming suffering and death. After they were fully convinced that he was the expected Messiah he corrected their preconceived ideas of what the Messiah should do and be. *Unto Jerusalem.* His sufferings and death were to take place in and about the city which was the capital of the Jewish nation, with all the rites and ceremonies of their worship. *Suffer many things.* What these sufferings were are described in the last chapters of the gospels. *Be killed.* He must not only suffer, but die also, and that by crucifixion. The disciples were thus warned of what would come, and when it did come they remembered what he had said, tho it did not save them from great disappointment. *Raised again.* Without his resurrection his death would be in vain. He will not only die but rise again. This should have been a comfort to the disciples, but it seems that they forgot this after the crucifixion until the angel called their attention to it, then they remembered it.

22 *Peter took him.* Probably to one side that he might speak to him privately. *Began.* That was as far as he got, for Jesus interrupted him. *Rebuke him.* What Jesus had predicted was so entirely opposed to the disciples' notion of what the Messiah should do and be, that their spokesman, Peter, undertook to rebuke him. The idea of Jesus' death was such a shock to Peter that he did not notice the promised resurrection. *Shall not be.* It was not to be if he could help it. His feeling was the result of receiving but half the truth.

23 *An offense.* A stumbling block. Peter was not Satan, but in trying to dissuade Jesus from his divinely appointed way to the kingdom and to redemption, he took the place of Satan. *Savorest.* He had the mind of the world, and not of Christ. It was the selfish instead of the Christly mind.

24-26 *Then said Jesus.* He now teaches them that not only is the way of sacrifice the way appointed for him, but the way of self-denial and self-sacrifice is the way of every true disciple of Jesus, of all who will follow him to glory. For each one the cross comes before the crown. *Any man.* Not for the Jew only, nor yet for the Gentile, but for any man. That word takes in the race. *Deny himself.* Renounce self, and let Jesus be the Master. *Take—cross.* Not on special occasions only, but daily. Each one has his own cross to bear, it may not be the same for each one, but it is a cross. *Follow.* Self denial and taking the cross come before the following. *Save—lose.* The duties and self-denials and cross bearings which may occasion the loss of life, the spirit filled life, life in all that the word means. Thus Jesus shows that what he had predicted as to his own life, would have to be the life of each disciple.

27, 28 *Son of man—come.* The time will come when Christ will be king, when all cross bearing and self-denials will be at an end. Life must be considered in view of its

end. Here is an announcement of Christ's exaltation as well as his humiliation. *Till they see.* They would see the beginning of the triumphs, which they did at Pentecost, and also at the judgment which came upon Jerusalem.

1. *The Divine Must.*—On the human side of life there are many "musts" but here is one that belongs to God. Jesus *must* suffer, that seems to have been the divinely appointed way. Whatever men may argue as to the necessity of Christ's death, under the circumstances, that is in view of the evils that existed, the sin that had rooted down in the human soul, the death of Jesus was a necessity. But we must read a little farther. Death is not to be the end, he will rise again. Here is the comfort. He died, but he lives again, and will live forever. There are too many people who go about as if the Christian life was the gloomiest thing in the world. They have read part of this verse only. Connect the two, death—resurrection.

2. *Death the Way of Life.*—Peter objected; he declared that Jesus must not die. But he did not understand the nature of the higher, spiritual life. Christ teaches Peter and everybody else that they must do the same thing in spirit if they would possess the higher life. Did Jesus have to take up the cross? So must the disciple. Did Jesus have to deny himself? So must the disciple. Did he have to die? So must everyone that would come in possession of the spiritual life. By saving life we lose it, by losing it for Christ's sake we save it. This is the great principle of the divine, spiritual life. Jesus taught this lesson to the Greeks when he said, Unless a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit. This is the great principle that prevails in the kingdom of God. Death to self and to the world is but the harbinger to the higher life of God in the soul, and until self is entirely renounced there is no room for the life divine.

3. *Value of the Soul.*—In the point of real value the possession of the world is as nothing compared with the soul. All the gold and silver in the world can not purchase pardon for us, break the chains of death, soothe the sorrows of the eternal burning, nor keep the soul out of hell. If one could get possession of the whole world he could keep it but a little while. Not a shred of it can we carry thro death's gate. The loss of the soul is a loss forever.

God provides opportunities, but man must furnish the will to accept them. There will never be lack of opportunities, as long as there is the spirit to use them. We need not sigh for more opportunities, but we do need to pray for more desire and willingness to accept those that God offers.

For gold and glory men will sail unknown seas and penetrate ice-pack and jungle. For God, some of us will not leave our firesides to go half a mile to a prayer meeting!